



US Army Corps  
of Engineers  
Omaha District

# Gavins Point Project Federal Inmate Program



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# Gavins Point Project

- Omaha District
- On Missouri River on South Dakota/Nebraska state line
- Multipurpose project including navigation, flood control, hydropower, recreation, regional visitor center, and threatened and endangered species management
- 1.7 million visits per year





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## How it all got started...



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## Program Chronology

- 1984-Yankton College (South Dakota) closes.
- 1988-Yankton Federal Prison Camp (Federal Bureau of Prisons) opens at former college campus.
- 1989-Project embarks on pilot program with prison camp to use inmates to assist Outside Maintenance personnel in plumbing, mechanical, and general labor.





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## Local Corps Staff Buy-in

- Essential to program establishment
- Some initial concerns about possible loss of jobs to inmates and personal safety. Concerns proved to be unfounded.
- Buy-in grew with time and is now essentially 100% among Corps staff.



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## The Next HUGE Step

Federal Inmates Constructing New  
Project Administration Building





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## Construction of Administration Building by Inmates

- Concept challenged Corps paradigm of construction.
- Strong support from Chief of Operations and Office of Counsel key to selling project and gaining support in District Office.



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## New Administration Building Continued...

- Project had technical staff to handle project.
- MOU with Bureau of Prisons signed by District Engineer in 1991.
- Built at GREAT COST SAVINGS!





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How it looks now...



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## Features of the MOU

- Relatively easy between 2 federal agencies.
- Inmates paid approx. 25 cents/hour by Bureau of Prisons (BOP).
- Corps provides “Technical Oversight”, not supervision of inmates.
- Inmates cannot displace federal employees.
- Inmates not used in sensitive project areas.
- BOP provides meals and all clothing.
- Inmates selected by Warden. Corps can refuse inmates or have sent back.



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## The Inmates...





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## The Inmates...

- 75% drug offenses, 8% fraud, 17% other.
- Average sentence 54 months.
- From the Midwest.
- No history of serious violence, escape, or sexual offenses.
- Within two years of being released from the prison camp.



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## Work Inmates Do For Us

- Clean administration building and regional visitor center.
- Grounds maintenance and landscaping.
- Work with Outside Maintenance Staff in plumbing, carpentry, general laborer situations.
- Put the “icing on the cake”...work we could never get done any other way.





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## Other Program Facts

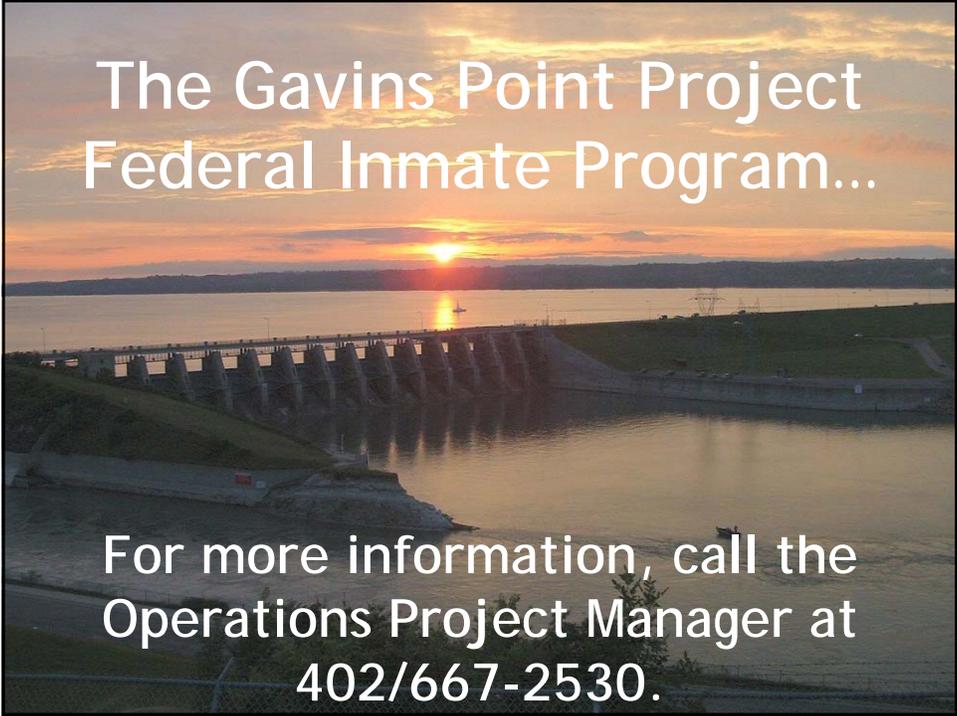
- Six inmates used on average. 12 during peak periods...e.g. summer.
- Annual cost avoidance about \$350K.
- 15 years of locally and nationally recognized program success.
- Inmates not used in power plant.
- Covered under AR 210-35.



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## A Gavins Point Project and Corps Success!





The Gavins Point Project  
Federal Inmate Program...

For more information, call the  
Operations Project Manager at  
402/667-2530.